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Early Indianapolis

By

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FOREWORD

On November 15, 1918, the Indianapolis Women's Club devoted its program to Indianapolis, the exercises being grouped under the title: "The Indianapolis Symphony." In this harmonious enterprise, the first paper, entitled "Allegro," was the one following, which is now rechristened, "Early Indianapolis." The appropriateness of both titles, in their diverse connections, will be apparent to the reader.

Through quotations from the diary of her grandmother, Mrs. Calvin Fletcher, Mrs. Hodges presents a peculiarly intimate view of early life in Indianapolis, which occasioned an appeal for her consent to its publication in this form.

J. P. DUNN, *Secy.*

Early Indianapolis

A verse from Riley's "Tale of the Airly Days" has pervaded my mind since this topic was assigned me, and, with an insistence which would not be denied has suggested the manner in which I should treat the opening number of the Indianapolis Symphony.

My Allegro is not necessarily a sprightly movement, with gay and merry touches, although these qualities are not lacking; but it is rather the beginning of the composition as well as a harmony of mingled sounds, a concert of voices—the voices of the past.

And so my heart warms towards Riley and his verse when he begs for "plane facts, plane words of the good old fashioned ways—

Don't tech 'em up like the poets does
Tel theyr all too fine for use.
Tell me a tale of the timber lands
Of the old time pioneers. * * *
Tell of the old log house—about
The loft and the puncheon flore—
The old fi-er-place, with the crane swung out,
And the latch string through the door."

In thinking of the earliest days one pictures the legislature and Jonathan Jennings, first governor of Indiana, consulting with the Commissioners appointed "to locate and lay out a permanent capital for the State." It is a matter of history that they decided on the site at the point where Fall Creek flows

into White River, June 7, 1820. Indianapolis consequently has served as the capital of the commonwealth nearly one hundred years.

Corydon, the pleasant village of story and pageant, had that distinction for a brief time immediately after the state was admitted into the Union, affixing by her admission, the nineteenth star to the flag.

Reviewing history we find there were many and far distant capitals. When France through her explorers possessed a vast domain of which this territory was a part, Paris was the capital. By the treaty of Paris, at the close of the Seven Years War, it shifted to London. Richmond, Virginia followed, after the Revolution, when Clark took possession of the country west of the Ohio river. The capital was nearer when Virginia's rule ceased in 1790 on the formation of the Northwest Territory, for Marietta, Ohio, was made the seat of government. Ten years later Vincennes had this distinction when Indiana Territory was established. Vincennes forms, therefore, the last link in the chain of capitals joining Paris in France, many leagues away, to Indiana Territory through the frontier French town on the Wabash.

Through these centuries of changing government Indiana can claim a past as interesting as it is remote, reaching as it does to the days when Louis the Great, fourteenth of that name, sat on the throne of France.

But kings and thrones have little to do with the "Capital in the Wilderness," our present concern, except perhaps to serve as a background, a dim and faded tapestry hung on the walls of memory bringing out by contrast the virility, the sturdiness, and the self dependence of the pioneers.

Mention has been made of the Commissioners earlier in this paper—let us join them as they sit about the cherry table (still in existence) in John McCormick's cabin considering

the business the Governor has entrusted to them; weighing the merits of the three sites proposed for the capital; the Bluffs, twenty miles to the south known as Whetzel's Settlement, the home of the Indian fighter and trace maker; Conner's Prairie to the north, a trading post surrounded by Indian huts, and the Fall Creek Settlement where McCormick's cabin stood.

The determining factors in the choice were the river, presumably navigable, its banks at this point making a good boat landing, the level surface of the adjacent land and last but by no means least, the central location of the Fall Creek Settlement.

After the Commissioners had made a favorable report to the Legislature, Congress granted the request for land by a donation of four sections for "the Capital in the Wilderness," as Judge Daniel Waite Howe so aptly calls it.

The donation was sixty miles from the nearest settlement and within a few miles of the boundary which divided the "New Purchase" from the land still claimed by the Indians.

Speaking of conditions which existed then a writer says, "There was no town, no people except in the lonely cabins miles apart; not a road leading anywhere, no farm lands under cultivation, no supplies except those bought by pack horses on the trails made originally by the Indians."

Under such circumstances a visit from the neighbor in the remote clearing or the arrival of the traveller with news of the world was remembered with delight. The itinerant preacher of any denomination was always a welcome guest; he played no small part in the development of Indiana from the crude material of a hundred years ago. He did not hold himself aloof from the social and economic duties of the period, but helped in log rollings, house raisings and corn huskings while he kept up his preaching.

Some of these men were unlearned, some even illiterate, but their congregations were not scholarly and no one now can question the wisdom of utilizing even such as they in the moral and religious work of the times. Should the field have been left uncultivated until enough college-bred preachers could be sent to look after it?

Our forefathers were absorbed in making and protecting their rude homes and gathering their meager crops—in clearing their recently purchased acres—they therefore had little time for intellectual pursuits.

In his defense of dialect Riley says with truth, "Many of the heroic ancestry of our best people grew unquestionably dialect of caste—not alone in speech but in every mental trait and personal address. It is a grievous fact for us to confront but many of them wore apparel of the commonest, talked loudly and doubtless said 'this away and that away, What y' doin' of and whur you goin' at'!"

But let us return to the settlement for which we have attempted by this digression to create atmosphere.

The Legislature included in the act ratifying the selection of the site provision for the election of three commissioners to lay out the capital and an agent to have charge of the sale of lots.

Judge Jeremiah Sullivan states that on his motion, seconded by Mr. Samuel Merrill, the town was named Indianapolis, a name which created some amusement when first proposed.

Of the commissioners elected, Christopher Harrison was the only one to appear at the place on the date fixed upon. Without delay he carried on alone the survey and the sale of lots, a proceeding very properly legalized by an act of the Legislature in November, 1821. Judge Harrison was one of the most interesting characters who ever reached Indiana.

He came from Maryland, was possessed of some wealth, had a fine education and a taste for art. He had loved Elizabeth Patterson, who married Jerome Bonaparte; failing to win her he came to Indiana where he lived a hermit on the bluffs of the Ohio river near Hanover. Seeking political honors he ran for governor against Jennings, but was badly defeated; notwithstanding this defeat he was held in high esteem by the successful candidate, as well as by the Legislature.

Harrison selected Alexander Ralston and Elias Pym Fordham as surveyors of the new capital, and Benjamin I. Blythe as clerk to the commissioners. Ralston was a Scotchman, a man of ability who had been entrusted by Lord Roslin with important engineering work before coming to this country. He had assisted Major L'Enfant, companion of La Fayette, in surveying Washington, the national capital. It is a well known fact that the design employed by L'Enfant influenced Ralston in his survey of Indianapolis, the scheme involving as it does a circle in the center with radiating avenues and streets intersecting at right angles. Completing the survey Ralston left the settlement but returned in 1822 for permanent residence. He built a little brick house on West Maryland street near Capitol avenue, remarkable at the time for the great number of windows and doors it contained; here he lived until his death in 1827; he was buried at Green Lawn Cemetery. It was said that he was involved in Aaron Burr's conspiracy, but it is probable that he was only employed to survey the lands Burr had purchased. Whatever the association Ralston was held in high esteem by his fellow townsmen; the children loved him and the birds came to his door to be fed.

Various memorials to his memory have been suggested, but as yet nothing has been done by this community.

There were a few, however, who did not forget him and

his services to the city. Ralston's body had rested in Green Lawn Cemetery half a century when it was carried to Crown Hill escorted by half a dozen old citizens and laid in the teachers' lot by the side of John B. Dillon, Indiana's distinguished historian.

Fordham, the second surveyor, well educated and of a discerning mind, was a member of an ancient family in the east of England. He joined the celebrated Illinois colony at English Prairie, in 1817. He was a pupil of George Stephenson, inventor of the locomotive steam engine.

Had I been more familiar with the history of my native city I would have looked with greater interest, when I visited Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Stephenson's engine, the Rocket, standing silent among its noisy successors in the railway station.

The association of the men concerned with the beginning of Indianapolis, with those of the far away world will bear repeating—Harrison with the beautiful Miss Patterson and Jerome Bonaparte; Ralston with Lord Roslin, Aaron Burr, L'Enfant, La Fayette, and Fordham with George Stephenson.

The survey completed, with certain reservations for public purposes, a state house, a state university, a court house, etc., the town lots heavily timbered, staked off at streets running through the woods, were offered for sale.

Now we witness the beginning of the town, the news having gone abroad that the capital was located immigrants began to arrive from Ohio, Kentucky, the Carolinas, from Pennsylvania, New England and Virginia. To follow "the course of empire" was a difficult and dangerous undertaking, since the roads were hardly more than trails worn by man and beast, and Indians lurked in the forest resentful of the change taking place in their old hunting ground. White river, an uncertain

mode of travel, furnished the only other means of approach to the new capital.

The sale of lots began in October, 1821; the purchasers in most cases selecting those along the river and on Washington street, for many years known as Main street. Isaac Wilson built the first frame house of the new town on what is now State House Square.

We have come to that stage of the town's development where I find myself turning to the diary of one of its pioneer mothers for some unembellished pictures of the early days. She was a participant in as well as a witness of the simple life of the town, a life at times "so uneventful that the utter absence of anything in it to remark upon became in itself remarkable."

The diary begins "October the first, 1821. We arrived at Indianapolis and procured a house or rough cabin, sixteen feet square, into which I entered with alacrity after enduring the fatigues of our journey from Ohio which lasted thirteen days. October the eighth. The sale of lots commenced near our house; a great concourse of people were present. Friday, November 10. I was spinning at Mrs. Nowlands. Saturday, I was baking pumpkin pies. Sunday I attended prayer meeting at Mr. Stephen's. Monday, November 19; this day I was shopping. I only bought a pound of cotton from which I spun some candlewick. Mrs. Nowland (a near neighbor) was making a bonnet; she came to me to know whether I would make it. I did not undertake it I but I gave her all the instruction I could." Mrs. Nowland hardly needs an introduction to those familiar with the early settlers. Her husband, Matthias, travelled up White river with the Commissioners on their tour of inspection, and being favorably impressed with the site they selected he returned to Kentucky for his family. Mr. Nowland built his home south of Washington street near what is now California street.

His grandson, Col. John W. Ray, describes it as a log cabin in the woods with a chimney of sticks and mud, with fireplace so wide and doorway so broad that once a week during the winter a horse dragged in a big back log for the fire. It was here that Ralston lived while surveying the capital. It was one of the traditions in Col. Ray's family that his mother, Sarah Anne Nowland, then a girl of thirteen years, carried the chain for the surveyors laying out the streets because men and boys were so busy clearing out the woods they could not be obtained to help the surveyors.

WHO PREACHED THE FIRST SERMON AND WHERE WAS IT DELIVERED?

The discussion has never waxed as warm as that concerning the first settler, Pogue or McCormick, but Rev. Rezin Hammond, whose congregation sat on logs rolled together by the surveying party near the Circle, claims first place; there are those, however, who make the same claim for William Cravens, grandfather of Mrs. Ann Woodburn and Mrs. Jane Patterson.

His sermon was delivered on a warm summer day; Mr. Cravens, who weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, consequently suffered from the excessive heat. Spying a young girl in the congregation fanning herself with a turkey's wing, and looking to it for relief from his discomfort, the preacher paused in the midst of his sermon; leaning from his improvised pulpit he beckoned to the girl, saying "Come here, darter, and fan your grandpap while he preaches."

To return to the diary, "I was very much engaged in trying out my tallow; next day I dipped candles and washed. Tuesday, December 25, 1821 (first Christmas day in the settlement), My husband went to the river and found at Mc-

George's a large collection of men, principally the candidates for the new county which is said to be just laid off. McG had the only barrel of cider in town, which I suppose to have cost about \$7.00. In the liberality of the candidates the barrel was unheaded and all promiscuously drank; and it being froze the dog irons were put in red hot * * * My husband found a great degree of accommodation and courtesy among all classes. The candidates leading the concourse from one place to another until sundown.

"Mrs. Bradley (wife of Henry, the carpenter) spent the day with me and Mrs. Paxton dined with us, then we both went home with Mrs. Paxton, took tea and sat awhile—went home and read a chapter in my Bible." Certainly this was a quiet celebration of Christmas day when compared with that of the men at McGeorge's!

"December 26th. Went to singing school and suffered very much with the cold. Word has come that Mr. Blake has arrived from Corydon; my husband has gone to see him. When I write a few more lines I will go myself, although I feel much fatigued; it has been so long a time since I have heard the fiddle played that I think it would sound very melodious."

Although I have no recollection of Mr. Blake I feel that I knew him because he was the warm friend of other generations of my family. I am for that reason quoting somewhat at length from Berry Sulgrove's tribute to him. "Mr. Blake's history for fifty years was the history of Indianapolis and no citizen has ever been more closely identified with the rise and progress of the city than he. When Kossuth, the distinguished Hungarian, visited Indianapolis, when the soldiers returned from the Mexican war, and when they came home from the South, Mr. Blake was the marshal of the day; no public pageant seemed complete without him. His ambition to become a useful citizen and a public benefactor outweighed all other considerations."

The Blake homestead stood at the northwest corner of North and Tennessee streets (the latter now Capitol avenue), and was a delightful old place with its sheltered brick-paved porch, its Dutch gable and the riot of vines over all.

When I visited the homestead Mrs. Blake met me on the porch and taking me by the hand lead me into the quaint old parlor to see her cherished possession, the bridal gift of her husband, the antiquated piano, now stained and darkened with age. It had been brought over the mountains from Baltimore in 1831 and was the first instrument of its kind in the new settlement. The pleasure her playing gave was long remembered by Mrs. Blake's friends. Perhaps "Uncle Jimmie," as he was affectionately called, took his fiddle from its box and joined in the music—I wish I might have heard the duets they played, this Hoosier Darby and Joan!

Mrs. Blake and her playing at the old piano inspired Dan Paine to write his poem "Da Capo," one of the best of our local productions. To revive your memory of it I quote a stanza or two:

"She sat at the old piano
Her fingers thin and pale
Ran over the yellow key-board
The chords of a minor scale.

Her hands were withered and shrunken,
Her form with age was bent;
They seemed twin spirits in look and tone;
Herself and the instrument.

For the instrument quaint and olden
With its single tremulous strings,
Was little more than a spirit,
And its tone seemed a whirr of wings."

The diary—"January the first, 1822. My husband and I have been invited to attend a party at John Wyant's today at 3 o'clock. I am unable to tell the aggregate of the happiness we shall enjoy.

"Mr. Hogden came for us with a carriage and carried us to Mr. Wyant's house at the river. Mr. Russell played a few tunes on the fiddle and we danced a few reels; returned home about 12 o'clock not much fatigued. 20 couples were present."

Going to a party in a carriage suggests a degree of luxury not yet attained by the towns people we would suppose; we find our conjecture is correct for Mrs. Martin, daughter of George Smith, the first publisher, and mother of Mrs. Gordon Tanner, Sr., also went to the ball in Hogden's carriage which she describes as "a great lumbering thing similar to the mud wagons used in stage coach days, when an ordinary stage could not navigate the flooded roads."

An incident occurred at this first dance and New Year's ball in the settlement one historian relates "which indicates a stronger matrimonial exclusiveness among some of the pioneers than prevails at the present day."

Mr. Wyant's tavern was a double cabin; while the landlord was in t'other house, as the second cabin was called, the guests had been welcomed in the room to the right of the porch which divided the tavern. It was time for the ball to commence and the guests grew impatient at the delay. One polished gentleman from Kentucky, remembering his early training beyond the Ohio river, invited his hostess to open the ball with him. Mrs. Wyant accepted his invitation with eagerness and the couple was moving gracefully across the dancing floor when the lady's husband returned from t'other house. His manner at once indicated disapproval of the scene which met his gaze. Going to the end of the room where Col. Russell sat with his fiddle poised on his shoulder he ordered him

to cease playing; then turning to the surprised company he said with sternness, "As far as I and my wife are concerned we are able to do our own dancing; it would look better for every man to follow our example and dance with his own wife; those of you who are so unfortunate as to have none can dance with the gals."

Col. Russell, the fiddler for the joyous occasion, was the first merchant of the settlement. At his store trade was carried on on a basis of barter making it possible to do business with a small amount of ready money. Here the needs of the town were supplied from a stock consisting of dry goods, queensware, hardware and groceries. Cash was given for hides and furs of every description. The fur trade did not fall off for many years, and it is interesting to note, in this connection, that Indianapolis became the center of it for a large part of the state and for some distance beyond its borders.

Col. Russell arrived from Kentucky in May, 1821, by the first keel boat to reach this point on White River. He was in turn county sheriff, militia officer and post master. Moreover, he was a fiddler of note and consequently in demand for all the early entertainments.

On January 22, 1822, the writer of the diary attended the wedding of Miss Patsy Chinn and Mr. Uriah Gates, probably the second wedding in the place.

As the two rooms of the cabin in which the ceremony was to take place were filled with guests she tells us the bride was compelled to make her toilet in the smoke house; from this improvised dressing room the bridegroom escorted her to the waiting company in the cabin. After the ceremony a wedding dinner was served, the table groaning under a feast the billionaire of today would have difficulty in duplicating. The piece de resistance was a fine saddle of venison placed in the

middle of the table; two large fat wild turkeys were at either end, still steaming hot from the clay oven in which they had been roasted; between the venison and the turkeys were pumpkin, chicken and various other pies.

From the side table or puncheon, the bride's mother assisted by the old ladies, was serving coffee ladled from a large sugar kettle which was hanging from the crane in the open fireplace. Maple sugar was used for sweetening and rich cream was plentiful.

In celebration of the wedding dancing continued for two days.

The infare or housewarming given by the newly married couple was no doubt a part of this revelry, for Edward Eggleston in "Roxy" says, "there could be no wedding in a Hoosier village without an infare on the following day.

In those days the faring into the house of the bridegrooms' parents was observed with great rejoicing."

For several days following the festivities attending Miss Chinn's wedding we find no record in the diary. The entry which follows makes clear the reason. "My husband and I came home after daylight the second day, slept until afternoon and then went back and put in another night. I have been asked to a quilting party but have declined since I do not think it proper to go when I am so weary."

Visiting one's neighbors was the most frequent social pleasure, spending the day or going to dinner when the guest arrived in season to assist in the preparation of the meal and had no pressing engagement to call her away before she had helped wash the dishes and put the room to rights. The children were invariably included in these invitations for the mother of a family was nurse as well as cook, house maid and seamstress. A few days after Miss Chinn's wedding our lady of the diary spends the day with Mrs. Hervey Bates, pre-

sumably to talk over the bride's outfit, the wedding dinner and the furnishings of the cabin into which she had fared.

Mr. and Mrs. Bates came to the new settlement, February 22, 1822. On the day of their arrival Mr. Bates as first sheriff of Marion County, appointed by Governor Jennings, issued a proclamation for the first election ever held in the New Purchase.

The office of sheriff was the only political office Mr. Bates ever filled although his friends frequently besought him to accept various public offices, he devoted himself to mercantile pursuits; all the important enterprises of the town were aided by his energy and ability. Among these undertakings the Bates House (northwest corner of Washington and Illinois streets), built in 1852, had more than local fame; it was known as one of the most complete and elegant hostleries in the West.

Housing as it did for many years, the distinguished men who came to the city it no doubt considered Lincoln, the first president elect to visit Indianapolis, its most distinguished guest, and his speech from the Washington street balcony the greatest event in its history.

Much excitement, it is recorded, preceded and attended the first election for which Sheriff Bates issued the proclamation.

There were at this time no political parties, no conventions, no caucuses, and the occasion resolved itself into a free fight for all comers. The combatants, it has been reported, were ranged under the titles of Whitewater and Kentucky. The emigration from these two sections was simultaneous and each wished to control the result. It was a state rather than a local contest; the interest centered in the office of clerk, considered the most important in the county.

James M. Ray, Whitewater's successful candidate, came to Indianapolis in the fall of '21.

A friend's estimate places him "among the foremost men here, quiet, unobtrusive, vigilant, never idle, his word as good as another man's oath."

Kentucky's candidate, Morris Morris, was also a pioneer of '21. He had the great advantage of a thorough English education, unusual in the settlement. He possessed a gentleness combined with decision, which is indeed a rare combination. It is a singular coincidence that Morris Morris and his son, Thomas A. Morris, served as commissioners for both State Houses. The father for the structure of 1835, modeled after the Parthenon, where the body of Lincoln laid in state on a day never to be forgotten by those of us who looked upon his face.

The election was held on the first day of April, 1822. The close of the day must have brought relief to the writer of the diary, for she says, "I spent the time very unsatisfactorily; there were so many candidates coming in and out I could neither read, write or do anything else."

"Friday, April 12, 1822.—Spent the afternoon at Mr. Buckner's when I got the sight of a young lady from Kentucky; at a distance she looked very flashy and carried a very high head. I did not have the pleasure of meeting her; perhaps if I had I would have found the lady as empty as myself."

"April 13.—Mr. Levington and some other men have been 10 miles up the river on the public lands cutting saw logs for several weeks. They made a contract with Daniel Yandes to deliver 2,000 logs at 1 dollar per piece, and since the rain the saw logs are coming down the river."

This transaction suggests carrying coals to Newcastle for the town site was full of fine timber; but it was probably easier to float the logs down the river than to get them to the mill over land.

In the preceding fall the State Agent had offered the timber in the street to anyone who would cut it. Lismund Basye, justice of the peace, was tempted by the offer and undertook the clearing of Washington street; much timber was cut and the only thoroughfare in the settlement blocked with it.

Thereupon all the townspeople turned out and cleared a roadway by huge bonfires. Apropos of this blockade of traffic Mr. Blake perpetuated his celebrated joke: "The early settlers spent their evenings one winter cutting and rolling logs in Washington street. They employed two or three hundred negroes to cut the logs in two and keep the heaps burning." A diagram must accompany this joke and explain it. The word "nigger" means to the backwoodsman a small log placed when blazing, across large logs to fire them; by tending the fire so made, large logs are divided more quickly than by an ax—consequently "a nigger in a woodpile" means something which destroys it and not, as I had supposed, our African brother.

Daniel Yandes, for whom the logs were cut up the river, was called the pioneer mill builder; he built a saw and grist mill, a tannery and in 1833 with Samuel Merrill, established the first cotton spinning factory in this region.

He brought \$4,000 with him when he came to the settlement in the spring of '21, which constituted him for many years the largest capitalist in the place. He was first treasurer of Marion County. Samuel Merrill's part in the pageant of the State Centennial is still fresh in our minds; he was the first state treasurer and served in both capitals, coming from Corydon to Indianapolis in 1824, when William Hendricks was Governor.

Mr. Merrill was one of our foremost pioneers, a man of high attainments and ideals.

Nicholas McCarty, friend and neighbor of Daniel Yandes, reached the settlement in 1823. Besides his mercantile business he took large contracts for Indian supplies; he was familiar with the dialects of the tribes on the Miami Reservation; he became interested in silk growing and the manufacture of hemp.

He was an unostentatious man of great personal popularity.

The diary of April, 1822: "Sunday, 21st—Walked down to the river where I saw many people crossing the ferry. Madam Wick, Mrs. Carter and I had the pleasure of riding up the river to the mouth of Fall Creek and back again to the ferry in the flat."

Flat boats loaded with provisions for the Southern market came down the river from a point one hundred and thirty miles above Indianapolis, when the water was high, but at this day navigation of the river has become a mere jest.

We smile when we read the following from resolutions adopted by a citizens' committee at the time of the arrival of the steamboat Gen. Hanna from Cincinnati, in 1831:

"The arrival of the Gen. Hanna should be viewed by the citizens of the White river country, and of our state at large as a proud triumph and as a fair and unanswerable demonstration of the fact that our beautiful river is susceptible of safe navigation for steam vessels of a much larger class than was anticipated by the most sanguine. Resolved that Capt. Blythe's company of artillery be invited to parade on this day at 2 o'clock near the boat to fire a salute in honor of the occasion."

Perhaps a number who are here today remember the sad fate of the Gov. Morton, the side wheeler licensed to carry on the coasting trade. For thirteen months she was the pride and joy of every citizen of the town, but on the 6th of August,

1866, her all too short existence ended when she sank at her moorings below the old National Bridge.

Mrs. Carter, one of the ladies referred to in the ride up the river, was the wife of Major Thomas Carter, the auctioneer at the memorable sale of town lots October 8 to 12, 1821, and tavern keeper as well. He built a log tavern just west of the present News building and called it the Rose Bush.

Here the first theatrical performance of the town was given, December 31, 1823, by a Mr. and Mrs. Smith, purporting to be directly from the New York theaters. Neither actor was less than fifty, one witness of their performance states. "They essayed the principal roles in 'The Jealous Lovers,' and 'Lord, What a Snow Storm in May and June.' Admittance, 25 cents. No music, at first because the fiddle strings broke. Russell and Bolton were requested by our host, a strict Baptist, to play nothing but note tunes or psalms, as he called them."

Encouraged by their reception the Smiths filled a return engagement the next summer, but they made the awful mistake of advertising in the Gazette and not in The Censor, whereupon the editor of The Censor sarcastically observes: "Mr. and Mrs. Smith, whose performances were treated with so much contempt and ridicule last winter, arrived in town a few days ago and commenced their performance last night. * * * The encouragement of this company, whose exhibition we understand (for we have never witnessed them) afford neither instruction nor rational entertainment, would be a reproach upon our understandings and would evince a want of taste and discrimination in our citizens which we are proud to say does not exist." After such a blasting newspaper article, it is not surprising to learn that "Smith and his company have absconded without taking from us any of our cash." Mr. Bolton, husband of the poetess, Sarah T. Bolton, also wit-

nessed the performance referred to. He says Mrs. Smith, who was at least sixty years old, in addition to her part in the play, sang the "Star Spangled Banner" and danced a horn-pipe, blindfolded, among eggs. In these days of soaring prices this act would certainly be a dangerous and costly performance.

But Madam Wick is still waiting on the flat boat to be introduced. She was the wife of William W. Wick, elected the first judge by the Legislature at Corydon in the winter of 1821-22.

The first session of the Circuit Court, at which Judge Wick presided, was held in a private house at Indianapolis, September 26, 1822. After the Judge, Associate Judges and other officers of the Court had presented their commissions and taken the oath of office, including the oath against duelling, which was very stringent, the following lawyers were admitted to practice: Calvin Fletcher, Hiram M. Curry, Obed Foote, Harvey Gregg, of Indianapolis, Daniel B. Wick, Oliver H. Smith, James Noble, James Rairiden, James Whitcomb and Lot Bloomfield, from the state.

The order of business was as follows: First, selection of grand jurors and appointment of prosecuting attorney; second, establishment of prison bounds for insolvent debtors; third, naturalization of Richard Good, "lately from Cork in the Kingdom of Ireland," according to his own statement; fourth, granting a tavern license to John Hawkins, the first license granted for this purpose in Marion county. (Hawkins' tavern was situated where the Lombard building stands.)

So ended the first day of court in the new settlement.

Calvin Fletcher, appointed first prosecuting attorney, reached here in the fall of 1821. He had a prominent part in the town's advancement, laboring unceasingly with his friends, Ovid Butler, Caleb Mills, Bishop E. R. Ames and

others for the establishment of free schools, but not until April 25, 1853, were such schools opened in Indianapolis. On that date a code of rules and regulations prepared by Mr. Fletcher was adopted; it constitutes the basis of the code in force in the schools at the present day.

Throughout the period of the civil war Governor Morton often appealed to Mr. Fletcher, then a leading banker, for advice and aid. On one notable occasion a large sum of money was needed to pay off bounties so that soldiers might be quickly sent to the front. In this emergency the Governor went to his friend, saying, "There is urgent need of ready money. What can be done?" Instantly came the reply, "What did you bring to carry it in?" The two men looked about for a receptacle. A market basket near at hand caught their eyes. This was filled with money and, lifting it to his arm, the Governor carried away a heavy load, but a lighter heart.

The diary: "Spent the night with Madam Wick, also had tea; her table was spread with the fruits of her industry; went home early, set Mr. B. (Mr. James Blake, a boarder) gathering bean sticks, got some eggs from Mrs. Alec Wilson to set a hen. Commenced a roundabout to go with the pantaloons I had made..

July 1. There has been a great deal of talk about celebrating the Fourth. My husband is this day engaged in writing toasts for the celebration.

Thursday, the Fourth of July, 1822 (the first observed in the settlement). There appears to be a great stir and liveliness among the people; the men had a barbecue, a buck killed by Robert Harding yesterday, and dined under the green trees at the west end of Washington street, on the Military Reserve."

The celebration opened with a sermon by Rev. John Mc-

Clung, a New Light, probably the first preacher to settle in Indianapolis; a brief speech followed the reading of the Declaration of Independence by Judge Wick; Washington's Inaugural Address, by Squire Obed Foote; Washington's Farewell Address, by John Hawkins, and a prayer and benediction by the Rev. Robert Brenton.

Toasts, fourteen in number, by Calvin Fletcher finished the programme. I quote the last one: "Indianapolis, may it not prove itself unworthy the honor the state has conferred upon it by making it the capital."

It is now almost a hundred years since this toast was given at the first Fourth of July celebration held in the new capital. The centennial of the capital in the wilderness approaches. Without delay we should begin our preparations for its observance. Let there be much deliberation by those charged with this important matter before the form of celebration is decided upon.

Let us commemorate the founding of the town with a memorial of lasting value, with a memorial that shall prove beyond question that Indianapolis is worthy of the honor conferred upon it one hundred years ago, when it was made the capital of the state.

As a fitting ending to the first Fourth of July celebration, the settlers held a ball at Jacob R. Crumbaugh's house (Crumbaugh was a justice of the peace), situated at the corner of Missouri and Market streets. There were no social dividing lines, no caste distinctions at this time, we may be sure, for the carpenter danced with the postmaster's wife and the judge lead out the butcher's lady on this occasion. Until 1828 military and civic organizations celebrated the Fourth with firing of salutes, parades, speeches, dinners, etc.; from that time, however, for a quarter of a century, a new order of observance prevailed. The Sabbath school procession becam

the great event of the day; it usually formed on Circle street and marched to the grove in the State House yard; here, before disbanding, the female teachers and the scholars, both male and female, were treated to refreshments of rusk and water, while the men concluded their celebration with a dinner in the sugar grove at the east end of the town, as far removed as possible from those who observed the day in a more ascetic manner by fasting on rusk and water.

The August entries in the dairy indicate much sickness among the people; there were frequent heavy rains and the water stood for months in the low spots of the ravines which traversed the town.

Malarial diseases followed. In fact, the ague was so prominent a feature of early Indianapolis that Mr. Dunn says it calls for special notice as one of the institutions of the place. Most of the settlers who suffered with it could say, as Demas McFarland did, that he "served a regular apprenticeship at the ague and worked at journey work at the chills and fever."

Mr. Demas McFarland, farmer, arrived in 1821. Many years after this date his daughters, maiden ladies, kept a school in the brick house on St. Clair street recently torn down to make way for the new Public Library. In this school the pupils learned the capitals of the states by singing, instead of reciting the lesson.

Because of the existing unhealthy conditions, it was fortunate for the settlers that five physicians established offices in Indianapolis at an early date. They were Drs. Mitchell, Scudder, Cool, Dunlap and Coe.

Dr. Mitchell was a very corpulent man, who never rode his horse out of a walk; he was made surgeon of the battalion raised in the town at the time of the Black Hawk war.

Young Dr. Scudder gave promise of a brilliant professional career, which was cut short by his death in 1829;

his colleagues showed their respect for his memory by wearing bands of crepe on their sleeves for thirty days.

Dr. Jonathan Cool, the best educated of them all, was a Princeton graduate and classmate of Judge Blackford. Dr. Cool made the first protest against the heroic doses of medicine given in those days.

Dr. Livingston Dunlap was the only surgeon in the town until Dr. Sanders came in 1830. Dr. Dunlap served in many civic offices and was professor of theory and practice in the Central Medical College. He had a large practice and his death in 1862 was widely lamented.

Dr. Isaac Coe came to the settlement in the spring of 1821. His home was near the Patterson homestead and the present City Hospital. He is remembered for his free use of calomel and the lancet. Mrs. Jane Merrill Ketcham, one of his patients in her childhood, says "it is no exaggeration to say that his pills were as large as cherries; twenty grains of calomel was a common dose and antimony until one was sure he was poisoned."

Dr. Coe was a charter member of the First Presbyterian Church, and his many years of service were recalled when, in 1901, the boxes in the corner stone of the church at the southwest corner of Pennsylvania and New York streets were opened on the clearing of the square for the Federal Building. The first box transferred from its resting place in the building of 1843, located on the Circle, contained the history of the church complete from 1821 to 1841 in Dr. Coe's handwriting, a period covering, among others, the pastorates of the Revs. David C. Proctor, George Bush, William A. Holli-day and Phineas D. Gurley. The church history of later years was found in the second box, with the names of the elders of 1866, Thomas H. Sharpe, Thomas MacIntire, William Sheets and Benjamin Harrison. The box also contained

this solemn injunction: "If this corner stone shall ever be displaced and these lines come before any human eyes in a coming generation, let whosoever may touch these memorials of those who have gone before them be assured that they inherit not only the toils but the prayers of many of the builders of this church."

Dr. Coe was the founder of Union Sunday School, which the writer of the diary mentions as early as June 16, 1822. This school was held in the cabinet shop of Caleb Scudder, which adjoined his dwelling on West Washington street, opposite the State House. Mr. Scudder is one of the most interesting of the early characters. Specimens of his cabinet work are prized today in Indianapolis homes.

Again I open the diary and find that busy autumn days are spent in gathering fruits and vegetables for winter use, in spinning wool for socks, in making a quilted petticoat. On an idle Sunday Thompson's Seasons was enjoyed and the Ladies' Casket read from cover to cover. Winter brought cold and snow; the wife was anxious for her husband who rode the distant circuit with Judge Wick.

But spring came at last and the maple sugar camp was opened. His son Miles later described the sugar-making as follows:

"In our pasture maple trees abounded. These, with the first thaw of the opening year, were tapped and sugar making began. Mother was the factotum in this business, but she carried it on very differently from the careless manner of most Hoosiers. Instead of sugar troughs, which were liable to stain the sap, she had clean crocks placed under the spiles. The sugar water when collected was carried to a half-faced camp and poured into kettles suspended by the side of a huge oak log. There, when the boiling was going on, mother stood and stirred and tasted and added until all was reduced to a

thick syrup. This was carried to the house, reboiled and grained, lest in the woods the flying pollen and early insects should mar the unsullied whiteness of the sugar. Sugar making time was a hey day for us boys. We scampered among the trees, playing Indian and hide and go seek. Mother showed us how to make whistles from the pawpaw bushes and pointed out the bloodroot, the snake root and ginseng which grew near the sugar camp."

Ginseng was wanted for the Chinese trade; it brought six cents a pound; it was very common in the woods and much of it was gathered, so that the sale of it developed to a considerable extent.

Thursday, March 6, 1823. "I was solicited to attend a tea party at Mrs. Walpole's. Am making a chemise. Commenced reading *The Horrors of Oakendale Abbey*, a romance" (the only one ever mentioned in the diary).

"December 1, 1823. Some Indians in with bear meat and venison; loins, $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents apiece. Captain John, a Wyandot chief, is among the number." Captain John was considered a dangerous man, but no charges were ever brought against him, although he lived about the settlement many years. He made his home in a hollow sycamore log on the east bank of the river. Parties of Indians often visited the settlement with game to sell. Besides deer, wild turkey and bear, the small fur-bearing animals were abundant. There were waterfowl of all kinds and swans were seen on the river on several occasions. Wildcats and wolves were also not uncommon. Dr. William H. Wishard encountered a pack of wolves in 1826; he had been sent, when a boy, from his home in Morgan County to get meal at the old bayou mill at Indianapolis, starting home after dark through the dense forest, young Wishard was confronted by a pack of wolves, which had

killed a deer near the road, and had difficulty in getting away from them.

The debating club formed a diversion for the men of the settlement, with the merits of the presidential candidates oftentimes as election approached the favorite topic of debate. In that connection, the writer of the diary makes the following entry: "My husband attended the debating club last night and spoke of Henry Clay, whom he had seen in Ohio before we came to Indiana. I have copied what he said about Clay: 'I had the pleasure of measuring in my mind the height, breadth, features and politeness of the renowned Henry Clay, the Cicero, at least so pronounced by the wisdom of the U. S. A.; yet, for the want of taste and discernment, and being destitute of the scales by which we can rightly judge of human greatness, I shall have pronounced him only a common man. His manner of address is more indicative of politeness than of greatness and wisdom. I repeat having seen him, I shall have pronounced him only a common man.'"

"Wednesday, December 24, 1823. My husband and I attended a ball at Washington Hall; the day was clear and cold. Thirty couples were present. The supper was splendid and everything surpassingly agreeable."

"We are cooking and preparing for camp meeting." This entry refers to the meeting held on the Three Notch road in a rolling tract of ground covered by large oak trees, five miles south of town. "I started this morning on Pomp (the favorite cream colored horse), with E. on the pillion behind me; found many already there, although we had started early. It was a joyful time, the sky was so blue, the trees were so green and the sweet singing made me happy beyond expressing.

"As we rode home we met Brother Armstrong riding slowly

along, with a red silk handkerchief thrown over his head, singing a stirring Methodist hymn.

"We saw deer and turkey tracks along the way and once two bucks, with their antlers in the velvet, bounded across the road."

The first period of the settlement draws to a close. The state offices have at last been moved from Corydon and the Legislature is about to meet in the new capital, which to this time has had only the honor of the name.

The second period of the settlement opens with new and interesting events to record, but we search in vain for further entries in the diary.

With increasing family cares, the writer has found little time to devote to her journal and the entries become brief and infrequent, until at last they cease altogether as the pen drops from the busy fingers.

The day is not long enough for the home maker to finish the work of the household and her labors are continued into the night. Then the finished patchwork quilt is taken out of the frame and spread upon the big bed in the corner; and the boys are tucked into the trundle bed, drawn out to receive their tired bodies.

A fresh log is laid on the red coals in the fireplace; the lighted candle is placed on the stand by the window to guide the homeward steps of the husband and father.

The evening tasks are finished, finished except one.

With a sigh of relief, the mother, a pioneer of the Capital in the Wilderness, bends over her baby's cradle and sings him to sleep with a soothing lullaby; with this sweet music my Allegro ceases.

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